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JENNER'S

First Cow's Horns

Discovered
in Worcester

With Compliments

Jenner's First Cow's Horns

"The horns of the cow from which the matter was first taken for vaccination.—Stepn. Jenner."

This is an inscription in what is proved to be the actual handwriting of Stephen Jenner, the grand-nephew of Dr. Edward Jenner, who was the discoverer of vaccination. And it was found in one of a pair of horns in a Worcester dealer's shop, a corresponding inscription in the other horn having been lost.

Mr. G. A. Turner, the principal of Anderson and Virgo, who have carried on business continuously as chemists (and as makers of "Anderson's Worcester salad cream") since 1808—a date some years before the death of the historic Dr. Edward Jenner—has purchased the horns and has had them mounted on a mahogany shield bearing a plate inscribed with the actual words written in the horns by Stephen Jenner. And for the present he proposes to place them in his shop in the Foregate, Worcester, where they will doubtless be of historic interest to all interested in medical science, and also to all who debate the efficacy of vaccination.

Discovered in Worcester

Mr. Turner has taken great pains to verify the handwriting of Stephen Jenner, and to prove that the horns are truly what the inscription says they are. He scrutinized at Somerset House the handwriting of the attesting witnesses, including that of Stephen Jenner, to the will of the great discoverer, and there he found "Stepn. Jenner" signed and spelt as it is on the inscription in the horn, and with the same characteristics. Through the courtesy of Mr. Herbert Scott, solicitor, of Gloucester, whose firm have acted for the Jenner family for a century, he has seen also and scrutinized the signature of Stephen Jenner upon a number of his paintings (for he was a painter), one of which still hangs in Mr. Scott's office. Mr. Scott became interested in the enquiries, and he has written: "I have no doubt whatever" of the authenticity of Stephen Jenner's handwriting in the horns. Mr. Scott has assisted Mr. Turner in proving this beyond quibble by getting for him from one of the Jenner family an original document in Stephen Jenner's handwriting. After mentioning that Stephen was the son of Dr. Henry Jenner and grand-nephew of Dr. Edward Jenner, this goes on to discuss vaccination; and it bears the same signature, "Stepn. Jenner," with precisely the same characteristics as the inscription in the horns and the signature on the pictures.

In the Pathological Department of St. George's Hospital, London, there is a cow hide bearing the following inscription:

"The skin of the cow from which the first vaccine matter was taken by Dr. Jenner. Presented by his son, October, 1857."

No one has questioned that this is the genuine hide, though the Curator, Dr. Donaldson, frankly admits that there is no other evidence to authenticate it. According to Baron's "Life of Jenner," Vol. 2,

p. 303, the cow, after serving a beneficial purpose, was turned out to end its days at Bradstone, a farm near Berkeley; and when it died its hide was "apparently given by Jenner's son to the hospital where the father had received his medical education." Of course, it is established that Dr. Jenner received his training at St. George's. Attached to that hide are horns made of wood, and it is on record that the original horns were absent when the hide was received at the hospital.

Dr. Donaldson says in a letter to Mr. Turner that these facts raise the presumption that the horns which Mr. Turner has acquired are the genuine horns. It is a singular fact that at the College of Physicians there is also a horn which is said to have belonged to a Jenner cow, but there has always been some doubt about it. Mr. Turner has interviewed Sir Humphrey Rolleston, President of the College of Physicians, and has discussed with him, and also with Dr. Barlow, the collected evidence as to the authenticity of his horns. Dr. Barlow shewed him the possession of the College, which bears on a silver plate the inscription :

Hide with wooden horns at St. George's

"The horn of a cow given by the benefactor of man, Dr. Jenner, to his friend Sir John Fisher, and presented to this institution in 1813."

It will be noted that this inscription does not say whether they are the horns of the second or the forty-second cow, which supplied Jenner with his first vaccine. As many cows may have been experimented with, this horn has not the same definite interest as the pair which are proved to belong to the first cow.

History of the original horns

Mr. Turner made exhaustive enquiries as to the history of the horns from the day of Jenner to the present day, and incidentally made quite a collection of evidence, including a photograph of the son of Henry Phipps, of Berkeley, the first man who was ever vaccinated; also a photograph of the house where Jenner lived. It should be explained that Mr. Turner purchased the horns from Mr. Clarke, furniture dealer, of Barbourne, whose father lives at King's Lawn, Gloucester. Mr. Turner ascertained from the father that the horns had been for upwards of eighty years in the family of the Clarkes. Mr. Clarke, senior, writes :

"I remember my father buying the horns from Mr. Stephen Jenner. One label has been lost owing to my carelessness since my father's death in 1879. At the time my father bought the horns we lived in Berkeley, where Dr. Jenner was formerly in practice. A man named James Phipps, whom I knew well, lived in a house left to him by Jenner for allowing experiments in vaccination to be carried out on him. My father remarked that Stephen Jenner belonged to a good family who must have gone down in the world to become anxious to raise money on articles which he thought much of. My father bought several paintings (water colours) of freshwater fish executed by Jenner himself at the same time that he bought the horns. These paintings I have lost sight of, but probably my father disposed of them, because he was somewhat of a dealer in this class of thing."

